

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 18, 2007

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
Room H-310, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Frelinghuysen,

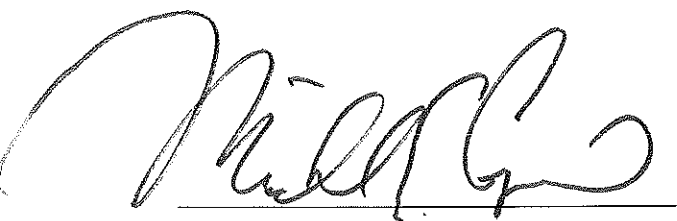
We are writing to ask for your support in funding the Young Witness Assistance Grant Program at the authorized level of \$3 million. This innovative program, which was recently authorized by the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act, is an important new tool for our local law enforcement officials and prosecutors in their fight against crime.

Unfortunately, it is becoming more commonplace for children to witness violent criminal acts ranging from armed robberies and assault to murder, sexual abuse, and domestic violence. As witnesses, young people may become targets for retaliation in the form of threats, harassment, and even violence by the perpetrators. This risk is even greater if the child decides to "do the right thing" and report the crime to the proper authorities. As a result, state and local prosecutors and law enforcement officials often face an uphill battle encouraging young people to come forward and assist them in bringing these violent perpetrators to justice.

The Young Witness Assistance Grant Program is a discretionary grant program at the Department of Justice that provides state and local law enforcement officials and prosecutors with a direct source of funding to create, implement and maintain assistance programs for young witnesses. This funding can be used in a number of crucial ways, including: counseling services, tutorial services, community outreach, and protection.

Our local law enforcement professionals on the front lines are doing everything they can to encourage young people to stand with them against crime in their neighborhoods. This program is a small step towards supporting their efforts. While we appreciate the difficult choices facing the committee in this appropriations cycle, we hope that you will consider the \$3 million appropriation necessary to fund this worthwhile program.

Sincerely,



John Lewis

Phil English

Steve Cohen

Chris Van Hallen

Janey Beeve

Rush Holt

Stephen K. Holt

Janey Holt

Jeffrey J. Schwartz

Jim Hickman

Edward J. Markey

Danny H. Davis

Donald M. Paeppe

Bay Fick

Corynne B. Mahony

Bill Paschall Jr.

Chris Stager

FY2009 Young Witness Grant Signatures

Member

Capuano, Michael

Becerra, Xavier

Cohen, Steve

Davis, Danny

Delahunt, Bill

English, Phil

Frank, Barney

Holt, Rush

Lewis, John

Lynch, Stephen

Maloney, Carolyn

Markey, Ed

McGovern, Jim

Pascrell, Bill

Payne, Donald

Schwartz, Allyson

Scott, David

Shays, Christopher

Van Hollen, Chris